

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KS, KN

SUBJECT: YI HU RAK' S COMMENTS ON JUNE 12-14 SOUTH- NORTH
COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING

1. AT MY REQUEST, I MET JULY 3 WITH ROK CIA DIRECTOR YI
HU RAK TO DISCUSS THE JUNE 12-14 SOUTH/ NORTH COORDINATING
COMMITTEE SESSION AND TO GET YI' S VIEWS ON PRESIDENT
PARK' S JUNE 23 STATEMENT AND ITS AFTERMATH (LATTER
SUBJECT REPORTED SEPTEL).

2. I ASKED YI ABOUT HIS IMPRESSIONS OF THE COORDINATING
COMMITTEE MEETING AND WHETHER HE NOTED ANY DIFFERENCES
BETWEEN THE FORMAL SESSIONS AND THE PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS.
YI STRESSED THAT BOTH THE FORMAL AND PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS
WENT SMOOTHLY, BUT WITHOUT ANY SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS. AS
PART OF THEIR PRE- UN TACTICS HE BELIEVED THE NORTH KOREANS
WERE UNDER INSTRUCTION NOT TO AGREE TO ANYTHING IN ORDER
TO DEMONSTRATE THAT NO PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE IN THE
SOUTH/ NORTH TALKS. FOR ITS PART THE ROK SIDE WAS NOT
PREPARED TO GO BEYOND THE PROPOSALS MADE IN THE LAST
COORDINATING COMMITTEE. NEITHER SIDE, THEREFORE, WISHED
TO PUSH AGGRESSIVELY ON ANY ISSUE AND THE SESSION WAS,
IN YI' S VIEW, " AN EASY ONE". IN FACT AT ONE POINT, YTO TEST THE NORTH KOREAN REACTION. AS HE SUSPECTED, THE
NORTH KOREANS REACTED VERY MILDLY.

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3. YI SAID THAT HIS PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH THE NORTH
KOREANS WERE MUCH THE SAME AS THE FORMAL SESSIONS.
HOWEVER THE NORTH KOREANS DID USE THE PRIVATE MEETINGS
WITH YI TO TEST WHETHER YI' S PERSONAL POSITION REMAINED
UNCHANGED. YI LAUGHINGLY SAID IT WAS A STRANGE EXPERIENCE
TO HAVE THEM TRYING TO FIND OUT WHETHER HE WAS STILL IN

A STRONG POSITION. (THE NORTH KOREANS OBVIOUSLY HAVE
HEARD THE RECURRENT RUMORS ABOUT YI' S ALLEGED FALL FROM
GRACE WITH PRESIDENT PARK.)

4. YI SAID THE ONLY HINT OF NORTH KOREAN FLEXIBILITY CAME
INDIRECTLY THROUGH ROK MEMBER CHANG KI- YONG. THE NORTH
KOREANS INDICATED THEY WOULD BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT ROK
PROPOSALS FOR SUB- COMMITTEES ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
EXVKHANGES IF THE ROK SIDE WOULD ALSO ACCEPT ESTABLISHMENT
OF THE MILITARY SUB- COMMITTEE. THIS WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE
TO THE ROK SIDE. I ASKED WHETHER THE NORTH KOREANS
WOULD HAVE ACCEPTED SUBSTITUTION OF THE POLITICAL
SUB- COMMITTEE FOR THE MILITARY SUB- COMMITTEE. YI SAID
THE NORTH KOREAN ANSWER TO THAT WAS QUOTE NO UNQUOTE.

5. IN SUMMING UP, YI INDICATED THAT NEITHER SIDE HAD
EXPECTED SUBSTANTIVE RESULTS FROM THE COORDINATING
COMMITTEE AND THERE WERE NONE. HE SAID HE EXPECTED NO
MOVEMENT IN THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE UNTIL AFTER THE
UNGA.

6. COMMENT: YI CONFIRMED OUR OWN ASSESSMENT OF NO PROGRESS
IN THE JUNE 12 -14 MEETING. BOTH THE SOUTH AND NORTH HAVE
THEIR EYE ON THE UNGA HANDLING OF THE KOREAN QUSTION.
NEITHER SIDE WISHES TO MAKE ANY MOVES IN THE COORDINATING
COMMITTEE. HOWEVER, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT BOTH SIDES STILL
SEE VALUE IN MAINTAINING THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE
AS A CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION, EVEN THOUGH THE MAJOR
FOCUS FOR THEIR MANEUVERINGS IS NOW THE UN, NOT THE
SOUTH/ NORTH DIALOGUE.
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